

## **CAPSULE SUMMARY**

**BA-1020**

**411 Fairmount Avenue**

**East Towson, Baltimore County**

**Circa 1900**

**Private**

The dwelling at 411 Fairmount Avenue was constructed circa 1900 in the East Towson neighborhood of Baltimore County. The history of East Towson dates from the purchase of one-and-a-quarter acres of land by Daniel Harris in September 1853. This is believed to be the first documented African-American landholding in Towson, and is among the oldest such ethnic enclave in Baltimore County. Further, manumitted slaves and/or descendents of former slaves, many of who were owned by Charles Ridgely, populated the neighborhood. Hampered by the low economic status of the residents, development in the 19<sup>th</sup> century was slow, increasing after the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. The setting of the property, building styles, and construction materials were guided by the limited economic status of the residents and their desire to establish a neighborhood of their own without the assistance of white architects, builders, and craftsmen. By 1927, the community was ninety-five percent improved with single-family dwellings, social buildings, a school, and religious structures.

This wood frame house is two-and-a-half stories high with a front-gable roof covered with asphalt shingles. The dwelling sits on a stone random rubble foundation and is re-clad with asbestos shingles. There is one center-interior brick chimney and a shed roof porch across the full-width of the façade. The porch has exposed rafter tails and replacement square posts. There is a round arched 2/2 double-hung wood sash window in the front gable. The single-leaf door and some of the 2/2 double-hung sash windows have been replaced. The transom is covered and the replacement windows are 1/1 double-hung aluminum sash. A wood frame oriel addition is on the side elevation, and two shed-roof additions are located on the rear elevation. Adjacent to the house is a gravel driveway, and the property is surrounded by mature shrubs. A chain link fence lines one side of the property.

Inventory No. BA- 1020

## 7. Description

Inventory No. BA- 1020

### Condition

<input type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated
<input type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> altered

Prepare both a one paragraph summary and a comprehensive description of the resource and its various elements as it exists today.

The wood frame house at 411 Fairmount Avenue in East Towson is two-and-a-half stories high with a front-gable roof covered with asphalt shingles. The dwelling sits on a stone random rubble foundation and is re-clad with asbestos shingles. There is one center-interior brick chimney and a shed roof porch across the full-width of the façade. The porch has exposed rafter tails and replacement square posts. There is a round arched 2/2 double-hung wood sash window in the front gable. The single-leaf door and some of the 2/2 double-hung sash windows have been replaced. The transom is covered and the replacement windows are 1/1 double-hung aluminum sash. A wood frame oriel addition is on the side elevation, and two shed-roof additions are located on the rear elevation. Adjacent to the house is a gravel driveway, and the property is surrounded by mature shrubs. A chain link fence lines one side of the property.

## 8. Significance

Inventory No. BA- 1020

Period	Areas of Significance	Check and justify below			
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> health/medicine	<input type="checkbox"/> performing arts	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> invention	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-1999	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment/ recreation	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion	
<input type="checkbox"/> 2000-	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> ethnic heritage	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science	
	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/ settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> social history	
	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning		<input type="checkbox"/> maritime history	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation	
	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation		<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> other:	

**Specific dates** 1890-1905 **Architect/Builder** Unknown

**Construction dates** 1890-1905

Evaluation for:

☐ National Register

☐ Maryland Register

☒ not evaluated

Prepare a one-paragraph summary statement of significance addressing applicable criteria, followed by a narrative discussion of the history of the resource and its context. (For compliance projects, complete evaluation on a DOE Form – see manual.)

The house at 411 Fairmount Avenue was constructed between 1890 and 1905 in the East Towson neighborhood of Baltimore County. East Towson is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history, specifically the pre-Civil War development of an African-American neighborhood in a predominately white community. The history of this property dates from the purchase of one-and-a-quarter acres of land by Daniel Harris in September 1853. This is believed to be the first documented African-American landholding in Towson, and is among the oldest such ethnic enclave in Baltimore County. Further, manumitted slaves and/or descendents of former slaves, many of who were owned by Charles Ridgely, populated the neighborhood. Hampered by the low economic status of the residents, development in the 19<sup>th</sup> century was slow, increasing after the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. The setting of the property, building styles, and construction materials were guided by the limited economic status of the residents and their desire to establish a neighborhood of their own without the assistance of white architects, builders, and craftsmen. By 1927, the community was ninety-five percent improved with single-family dwellings, social buildings, a school, and religious structures. Many of the current homeowners and tenants living in the neighborhood are descendents of the first African-American residents.

East Towson as a whole is representative of an important phase of architectural development in Baltimore County, illustrating the dilution of popular architectural styles to more efficiently meet the needs of the neighborhood, and the builders' untrained abilities to execute the fashionable ornamentation. Thus, East Towson provided lower cost housing in a more suburban neighborhood, rather than the urban setting their economic status typically perpetuated.

## 9. Major Bibliographical References

Inventory No. BA- 1020

*Atlas of Baltimore County, Maryland.* Philadelphia, PA: G. M. Hopkins, 1877.

Baltimore County Historic Inventory.

Brooks, Neal A. and Eric G. Rockel. *A History of Baltimore County.* Towson, MD: Friends of the Towson Library, Inc., 1979.

*Map of Baltimore County.* Philadelphia, PA: G. W. Bromley, 1915.

Scharf, J. Thomas. *History of Baltimore City and County From the Earliest Period to the Present Day: Including Biographical Sketches of Their Representative Men.* Philadelphia, PA: Louis H. Everts, 1881. Reprinted by Higginson Book Company, Salem, MA.

Sidney, J. C. *Map of the City and County of Baltimore, Maryland, from Original Surveys.* Baltimore, MD: James M. Stephens, 1850.

## 10. Geographical Data

Acreage of surveyed property .06 Acre  
Acreage of historical setting Unknown  
Quadrangle name Towson

Quadrangle scale: 1:24,000

### Verbal boundary description and justification

The dwelling is located at 411 Fairmount Avenue in East Towson in the Ninth District of Baltimore County. It has historically been associated with Tax Map 70A, Parcel 548 since its construction between 1890-1905.

## 11. Form Prepared by

name/title	K. Baynard, R. Weidlich, J. Bunting, Architectural Historians		
organization	EHT Traceries, Incorporated	date	November 30, 2001
street & number	1121 5th Street NW	telephone	202.393.1199
city or town	Washington	state	DC

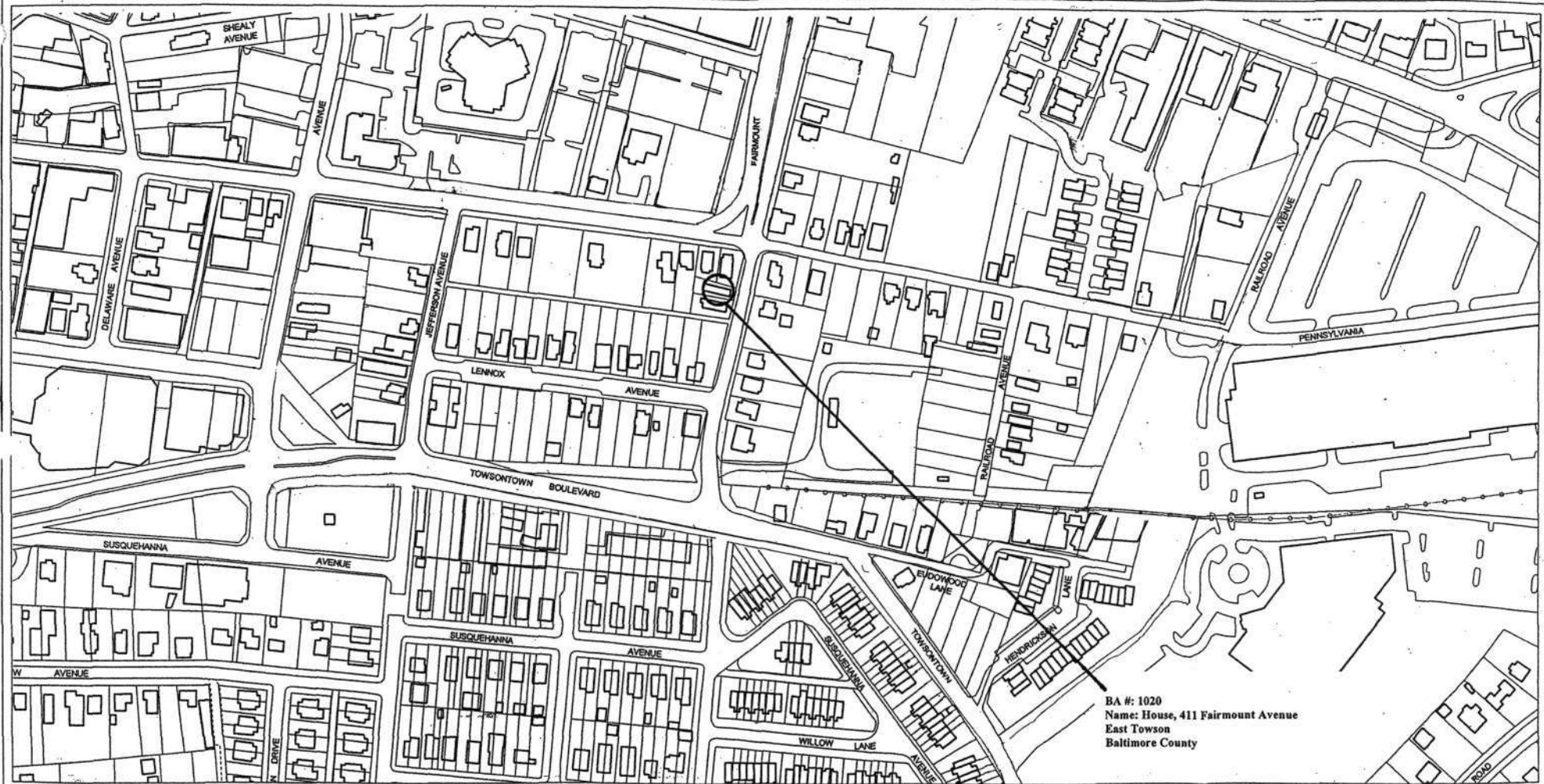
The Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties was officially created by an Act of the Maryland Legislature to be found in the Annotated Code of Maryland, Article 41, Section 181 KA, 1974 supplement.

The survey and inventory are being prepared for information and record purposes only and do not constitute any infringement of individual property rights.

return to: Maryland Historical Trust  
DHCD/DHCP  
100 Community Place  
Crownsville, MD 21032-2023  
410-514-7600



# East Towson: Planimetric Data



BA #: 1020  
Name: House, 411 Fairmount Avenue  
East Towson  
Baltimore County



Prepared by:  
Baltimore County Office of Planning  
401 Bosley Avenue  
Towson, Maryland 21204  
June, 2001



Scale  
1 inch = 200 feet  
1:2400  
100 0 100 200 Feet

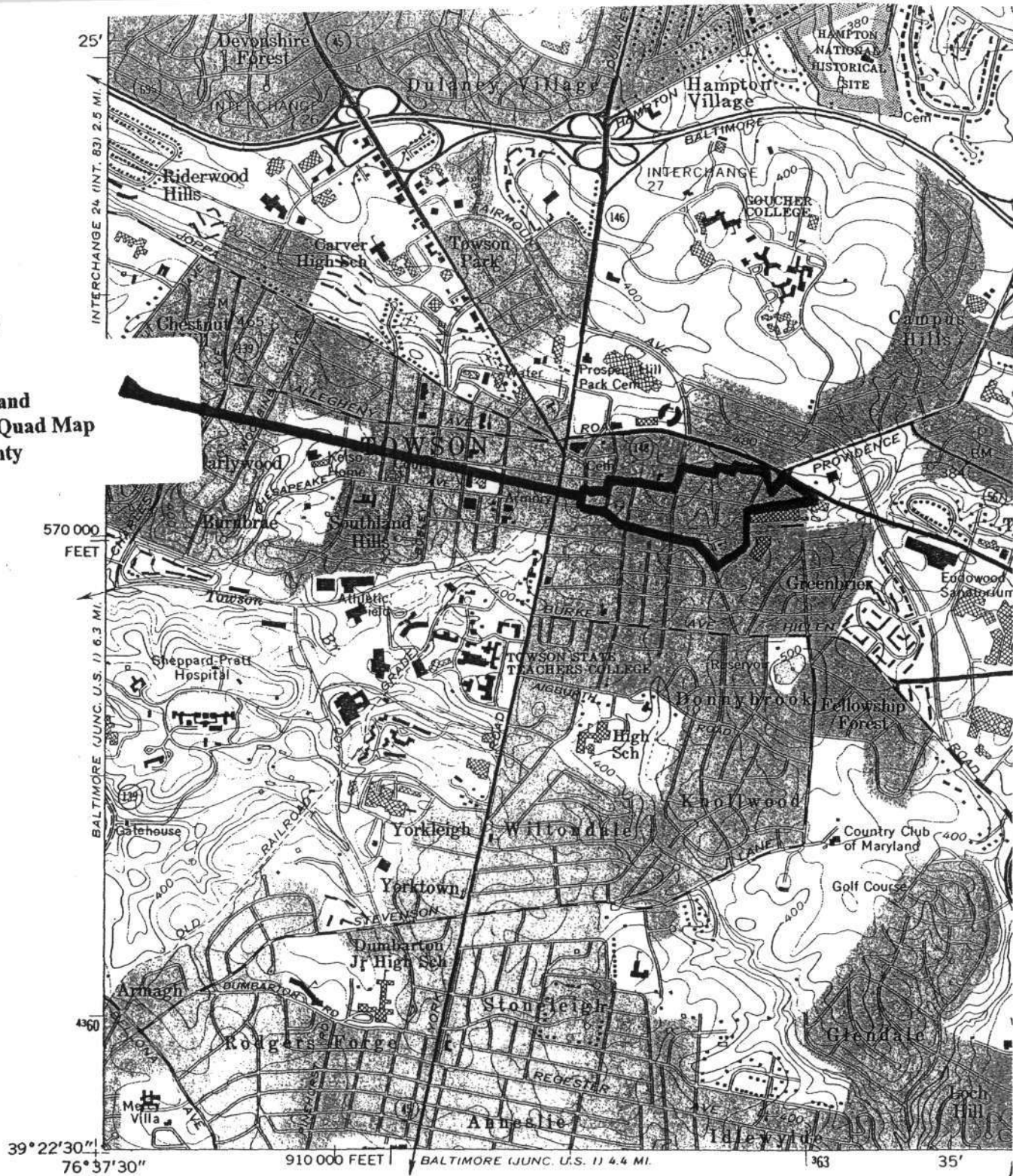
Legend

Paved Roads	Study Area Boundary
Unpaved Roads	Hydrographic Features
Paved Parking / Driveways	Buildings
	Vegetation

Data Sources:  
Planimetric Data: Baltimore County OIT GIS Services Unit (1:2400)  
Parcel Boundaries: Baltimore County OIT GIS Services Unit (1:2400)  
Study Area: Baltimore County Office of Planning (1:2400)  
Coordinate System:  
Maryland State Plane: NAD83/91 Horizontal Datum  
Elevations in Feet: NAVD83 Vertical Datum  
Date of Data Capture: March 1996  
Scale of Data Capture: 1" = 100'

BA-1020

East Towson  
Towson, Maryland  
Towson USGS Quad Map  
Baltimore County



(BALTIMORE WEST)  
5662' SW

Mapped by the Army Map Service  
Edited and published by the Geological Survey  
Control by USGS, USC&GS, USCE, and Maryland  
Bureau of Control Surveys and Maps

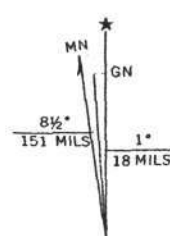
Culture and drainage in part compiled from aerial photographs  
taken 1943. Topography by planetable surveys 1944  
Culture revised by the Geological Survey 1957

Polyconic projection. 1927 North American datum  
10,000-foot grid based on Maryland coordinate system  
1000-metre Universal Transverse Mercator grid ticks,  
zone 18, shown in blue

Red tint indicates areas in which only  
landmark buildings are shown

Revisions shown in purple compiled by the Geological Survey from  
aerial photographs taken 1966 and 1974. This information not  
field checked

Purple tint indicates extension of urban areas



UTM GRID AND 1974 MAGNETIC NORTH  
DECLINATION AT CENTER OF SHEET





BA-1020

HOUSE, 411 FAIRMOUNT AVENUE

BALTIMORE COUNTY, MD

MD-SHP0

SOUTHEAST CORNER, VIEW LOOKING NORTHWEST

1 of 2

TRACERIES, 10/2001



BA- 1020

HOUSE, 411 FAIRMOUNT AVENUE

BALTIMORE COUNTY, MD

MD-SHPD

NORTHEAST CORNER, VIEW LOOKING SOUTHWEST

2 of 2

TRACERIES, 10/2001

## MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST

MAG #0310205704

## INVENTORY FORM FOR STATE HISTORIC SITES SURVEY

**1 NAME**

HISTORIC

THE COOK HOUSE II

AND/OR COMMON

**2 LOCATION**

STREET &amp; NUMBER 411 Fairmount Ave.

second

CITY, TOWN Towson Md. 21204

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT  
Baltimore

VICINITY OF

STATE

COUNTY

**3 CLASSIFICATION**

## CATEGORY

☐ DISTRICT  
☐ BUILDING(S)  
☒ STRUCTURE  
☐ SITE  
☐ OBJECT

## OWNERSHIP

☒ PUBLIC  
☐ PRIVATE  
☐ BOTH

## PUBLIC ACQUISITION

☐ IN PROCESS  
☐ BEING CONSIDERED

## X STATUS

☐ OCCUPIED  
☐ UNOCCUPIED  
☐ WORK IN PROGRESS  
☐ ACCESSIBLE  
☐ YES: RESTRICTED  
☐ YES: UNRESTRICTED  
☐ NO

## PRESENT USE

☐ AGRICULTURE ☐ MUSEUM  
☐ COMMERCIAL ☐ PARK  
☐ EDUCATIONAL ☒ PRIVATE RESIDENCE  
☐ ENTERTAINMENT ☐ RELIGIOUS  
☐ GOVERNMENT ☐ SCIENTIFIC  
☐ INDUSTRIAL ☐ TRANSPORTATION  
☐ MILITARY ☐ OTHER:

**4 OWNER OF PROPERTY**

NAME

Hilda Alberta Cook

Telephone #:

STREET &amp; NUMBER

411 Fairmount Ave.

CITY, TOWN

Towson Md. 21204 VICINITY OF

STATE, zip code

**5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION**

COURTHOUSE,  
 REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC. Baltimore County Courthouse

Liber #:

Folio #: 5299:884

STREET &amp; NUMBER

401 Bosley Ave.

CITY, TOWN

Towson Md. 21204

STATE

**6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS**

TITLE

BA-1020 - 411 Fairmount

c. 1915 - 1927

This simple frame house is almost identical to its neighbor,  
 409 Fairmount. It is two stories high, two bays wide, and three  
 rooms deep. This frame house features a porch on its main facade.

**7 DESCRIPTION**

**CONDITION**

- |  |                                       |
|--|---------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT       | <input type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED |
| <input type="checkbox"/> GOOD            | <input type="checkbox"/> RUINS        |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> FAIR | <input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED    |

**CHECK ONE**

- ☒ UNALTERED  
☐ ALTERED

**CHECK ONE**

- ☐ ORIGINAL SITE  
☐ MOVED      DATE \_\_\_\_\_

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

411 Fairmount

This house is almost identical to its neighbor, 409 Fairmount. It is two-stories in height and three rooms deep, with a street-facing gable end. A one-story porch crosses the front. A door opens at the south end of the east facade. An adjacent window lights the first floor, while two 2/2 sash windows light the second floor and an arched window lights the gable. A second-story bathroom addition protruding from the north side is supported by boxed bracing. The house is sheathed in white asbestos shingles.



**8 SIGNIFICANCE**

BA-1020

PERIOD		AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW			
<input type="checkbox"/> PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNITY PLANNING	<input type="checkbox"/> LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGION	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> CONSERVATION	<input type="checkbox"/> LAW	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENCE	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> ECONOMICS	<input type="checkbox"/> LITERATURE	<input type="checkbox"/> SCULPTURE	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)	
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION			

SPECIFIC DATES

BUILDER/ARCHITECT

## STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Deeds for this property date back to 1867 when Samuel Chew died testate, January 10, 1887. The property (Wills JPC #36:548) was left to his wife, Mary Johnson Brown Chew. Mary Brown Chew died leaving her children heirs to the property. The tract of land was divided into equal shares between Elizabeth Chew, Anne S. Alston, Anne Alston, Evelyn (Chew) Windsor, and Eileen Chew. The Pennsylvania Insurance Company purchased the property and subsequently conveyed the property to Edward and Clara Ehman, August 9, 1943. Twenty-four years later Clara Ehman sold the property to Josef and Anne Gehring.

Baltimore County Office of Land Records Liber Folio  
1301:1  
4784:269

Wills: T.P. Folio 106  
J.P.C.#36:548

CONTINUE ON SEPARATE SHEET IF NECESSARY

**9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES**

CONTINUE ON SEPARATE SHEET IF NECESSARY

**10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA**

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY \_\_\_\_\_

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE

COUNTY

STATE

COUNTY

**11 FORM PREPARED BY**

NAME / TITLE

Marcus Pollock/coordinator Merry Stinson/architect 7/77

ORGANIZATION

Committee to Save E. Towson/Towson Ymca

DATE

823-8870

STREET &amp; NUMBER

600 W. Chesapeake Ave.

TELEPHONE

CITY OR TOWN

Towson Md. 21204

STATE

The Maryland Historic Sites Inventory was officially created by an Act of the Maryland Legislature, to be found in the Annotated Code of Maryland, Article 41, Section 181 KA, 1974 Supplement.

The Survey and Inventory are being prepared for information and record purposes only and do not constitute any infringement of individual property rights.

RETURN TO: Maryland Historical Trust  
The Shaw House, 21 State Circle  
Annapolis, Maryland 21401  
(301) 267-1438